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Lyria & Rivia

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The **Confederation of Lyria and Rivia**, also known as the **Commonwealth of Lyria and Rivia**, the **Twin Kingdoms**, **Twin Realms** or simply **Lyria and Rivia**, was the name given to the union of the two kingdoms of the same name, located in the Dol Angra region of the Northern Realms in the western part of the Old Continent. The Confederation existed intermittently until the mid-14th century, when it ultimately fragmented into multiple smaller states. Centuries later, at least in the case of Rivia, its precise location was largely forgotten—though its coat of arms continued to be remembered.

Lyria & Rivia

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Lyria and Rivia Coat of Arms

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Status	Kingdom
Societal information	
Official Language	Nordlingaen
Demonym	Rivian or Lyrian Riv or Lyr (degoratory)

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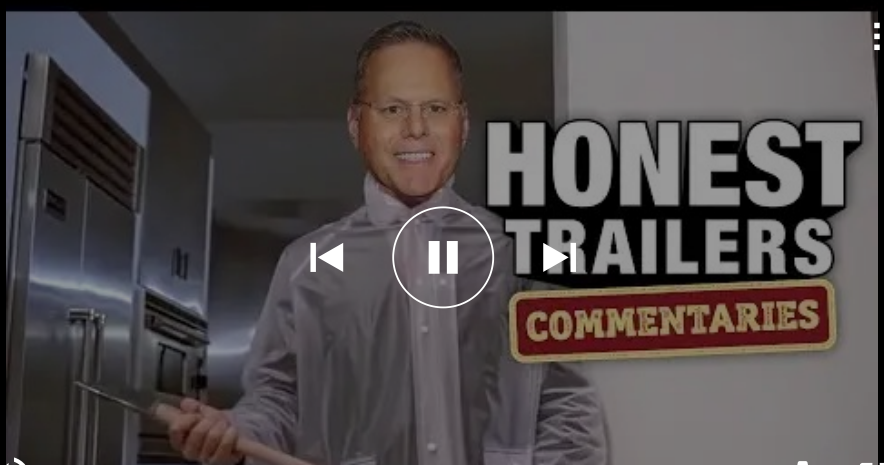


Administrative Division

The Commonwealth was divided into two constituent states. Each of these, in turn, was organized into communities that encompassed several regions. These regions were further subdivided into various types of noble jurisdictions depending on the ruling family of the area: banates, boyates, duchies, baronies, and so forth—down to the lowest tier, the county.

Below the counties lay the municipalities, which, much like in other Northern Kingdoms, were governed by mayors.

Climate

The Commonwealth was entirely landlocked, with no access to the sea—not even to an inland body of water, as in the case of the southern land of Gemmeria with the Sea of Gales. As a result, its climate was not oceanic but predominantly continental.

This continental severity, however, was moderated by the presence of large lakes such as Loch Eskalott, next to the city of Rivia, and Loch Oran, around which the city of Lyria was built. Thanks to their size, these bodies of water softened the seasonal extremes: summers, while sultry, were not oppressively hot, and winters were comparatively mild. Frosts were rare, and any snow that fell melted almost as soon as it touched the ground.

These conditions, coupled with the region's scenic landscapes—particularly Lyria, famed for its picturesque mountains—made the Commonwealth a popular retreat. Many mages chose to settle there for its agreeable climate, and numerous nobles, both native and foreign (especially from neighboring Temeria's vassal state of Sodden, as well as from Aedirn), favored it as a place to pass the winter.

Culture

General Outlook

Given the turbulent and often complicated shared history of both kingdoms, records show that even during periods of union, rivalry between Lyrians and Rivians was ever-present. This tension produced a wealth of stereotypes that spread beyond their borders to other Northern Realms. Among the most notorious are sayings such as *"all Rivians are thieves"* or *"Lyrian women are looser than hens."*

Yet this same rivalry fostered a spirit of competition that gave rise to remarkable virtuosity. Each side sought to outdo the other, often through deliberate contrast: *"if a Rivian/Lyrian does this, then I will do the opposite."* One of the most notable results of this dynamic was in the military sphere: Lyrian crossbowmen became the finest in the North, while Rivians earned renown as

master swordsmen. Rivian swordplay, especially the infamous Rivian Smash style—a form of dirty, close-quarters combat—became so effective that it was eventually exported to other military forces.

Accents

Rivians and Lyrians spoke Common Nordling with a highly distinctive accent. So characteristic was their speech that one could often identify a native—or even someone pretending to be one, such as a certain famous witcher—merely by hearing them. Yet this same marked difference, reinforced by their mutual conflicts and stereotypes, often led outsiders to associate both peoples with coarseness and barbarity.

The standard Lyrian accent was quite close to the Rivian due to shared history, but key differences set it apart. Lyrian speech tended to replace the Rivian affricates ch and dz with fricatives like sh and zh. Lyrian vowels also leaned toward a more "*closed*" pronunciation, especially with final -a endings.

The standard Rivian accent, meanwhile, preserved the affricates ch and dz absent from Lyrian, and its vowels were more centralized. This gave Rivian a somewhat flatter and more neutral sound compared to Lyrian's sharper distinctions between open and closed vowels.

Architecture

Though broadly similar to other examples of Nordling design—with strong Temerian and Cintran influences for obvious historical reasons—the architecture of the Commonwealth developed distinctive traits of its own. Chief among these was the marked influence of dwarven brutalism.

An example of Rivian architecture heavily influenced by the dwarven style

This aesthetic, born from stonework traditions of Mahakam, left a visible imprint particularly in Rivian settlements. It could be seen in the stark, weighty proportions of their buildings: heavy columns, reinforced arches, and imposing entryways that conveyed a sense of endurance against both time and siege. Rooflines too bore this influence, often sloping steeply or framed with angular overhangs reminiscent of dwarven halls.

The result was a hybrid style—Nordling in ornamentation, yet dwarven in form—that set Lyrian and especially Rivian cities apart from their neighbors.

Art

Unlike in many other Nordling states, where painting enjoyed pride of place among the arts, in the Commonwealth it never reached the same level of esteem. Though valued, it was

overshadowed by theatre and dramaturgy. This was largely the product of the Commonwealth's tumultuous history: constant wars, political upheavals, and social unrest fostered a widespread yearning for escapism in the Lyrian and Rivian mentality—something neither paintings, neither literature nor music alone could fully provide.

Such was the importance and refinement of drama in the twin kingdoms that by the 13th century, any playwright or actor of true ambition, after completing their studies in the liberal arts at Oxenfurt or the academies of Verden, Kovir, Toussaint, or even the lofty Nilfgaardian Empire, was expected to spend up to three years at the Grand Society of Theatre of Vinograd in Rivia. The institution was regarded as the pinnacle of dramatic training in the North—and to a certain extent even in the South, despite the Empire boasting its own prestigious schools—shaping generations of performers and writers who carried the theatrical traditions and styles of the Twin Kingdoms far beyond the Commonwealth's borders.

Cuisine

As a landlocked realm with limited access to salt, the cuisine of Lyria and Rivia was often described—particularly by visitors from coastal regions—as "*bland*." To compensate, Lyrian and Rivian cooks relied heavily on the abundance of local fruits, vegetables, and herbs to add flavor to their dishes.

Vegetables that enhanced rather than masked natural tastes were especially prized; onions, for example, were a staple ingredient. Among herbs, rosemary, thyme, fennel, and similar aromatics saw widespread use, finding their way into stews, breads, and roasts alike. The result was a distinctively earthy, herb-forward culinary tradition, where freshness and reinforcement of natural flavors took precedence over strong seasonings or heavy sauces.

Currency

The currency of the Commonwealth was the gulden, a coin of relatively low value compared to those of its neighbors. Four guldens equaled a single ducat, placing it well beneath the exchange rate of the ducat against the Redanian crown, which stood at roughly one to three.

The gulden's value fluctuated over time. Its highest point came toward the end of the 13th century, following the expedition to the Far East led by the Temerian explorer Fabio Sachs, which had been financed by the Commonwealth's crown. The venture, though risky, yielded the promised returns and temporarily bolstered confidence in the gulden.

A gulden coin from behind, the spiral represented the decades of the monarch's reign ruling at that time when the coin was emmited

The coin was minted primarily from gold, silver, and copper, with secondary alloys of lanthanum and tin.

As for its name, the most widely accepted theory holds that gulden derived from a corruption of the Common Nordling adjective *golden*. It was at once a linguistic "*mispronunciation*" by the people of the Commonwealth and a sardonic jest, given that the coin was not made of pure gold.

Education

As in most of the Northern Kingdoms—with the notable exception of Temeria under King Griffin's short-lived program of free elementary schools—education in the Commonwealth remained largely the preserve of the upper classes. Admission to university was exceedingly difficult unless one was wealthy or born into an influential family.

Opportunities, however, were not entirely absent. Owing to the growing clout of Rivia's bourgeoisie—particularly its industrial magnates—it was not uncommon for prosperous fiscal years to yield generous endowments to the universities of Lyria and Rivia. These initiatives aimed to "*find needles in the haystack*" among the common populace and to cultivate new talent.

The process was notoriously demanding: admission hinged on rigorous entrance examinations, preparation for which could take anywhere from three to six months depending on the intended field of study. Those who succeeded not only secured a coveted place in higher learning with all expenses covered but also conferred social prestige upon the patrons who had funded such programs across the years.

Entertainment

The society of the Commonwealth enjoyed much the same forms of entertainment as other Nordling realms: art, music, poetry, and the like. Yet among all these pursuits, the most prominent across all classes was shadow play. This form of theatre was prized not only for amusement but also for its didactic and proselytizing potential. It was also often used as a vehicle for satire, especially to lampoon nobles or criticize political decisions under the cover of allegory and humor.

Bards and jesters likewise occupied an unusually elevated status in the Commonwealth, enjoying privileges comparable to those of lesser nobles—something rarely seen elsewhere in the North unless an entertainer possessed exceptional fame.

Opera, by contrast, found little favor among the elite of Lyria and Rivia, many dismissing it as tediously dull.

Dwarven customs also left their mark despite human reluctance to admit it. Drinking contests, card games, eating competitions, slap duels, and bouts of improvised insult-trading all became popular diversions among Lyrians and Rivians alike.

Hunting held particular prestige among the nobility and mages, while other popular pastimes for all classes included insect collecting, hiking, swimming, diving, fishing, and the uniquely local sport of bait, played in rivers and, on rare occasions—if financed by the crown—in the lakes of the two capitals. In this game, a ball of leather was thrown into the water; players had to dive to retrieve it and, through teamwork while swimming, carry and force it into a hole set into the opposing side of the riverbank or lake.

Fistfights, despite the stereotypes, were not especially popular in the Commonwealth. Wrestling, however, did find some practice—particularly in the non-human ghettos, and on the human side among mercenaries, veteran soldiers, and former criminals. These bouts were usually held in specialized venues and only rarely in public spaces.

National Holidays

Throughout its history, the Commonwealth celebrated numerous national holidays, though their number and nature often shifted according to the will of the reigning monarch.

Some, however, remained constant. These included the founding day of each kingdom; several religious observances such as the feasts of the saints of the Nordling faith (though without the flamboyance of Toussaint), the Holy Week celebrated by the followers of Kreve, and Yule. Historical commemorations were also present, such as the Day of the Return of the White Queen, honoring Queen Meve's restoration of both kingdoms during the Second Northern War. Socially rooted holidays also emerged, in which certain groups of workers or professions were granted rest days in remembrance of significant historical events.

The Unification Day, meanwhile, proved the most changeable of all. Given the turbulent and often fractious history of the twin kingdoms, its observance—and even whether it was celebrated at all—varied greatly depending on the era and the disposition of the monarch.

Social Structure

Like the rest of the North, Lyria and Rivia were organized under a feudal system. And, as with their Nordling neighbors, the institution of slavery was absent, replaced instead by serfdom. Yet in practice, the plight of non-humans in the Commonwealth often blurred this distinction. Among the poorest, many lived in conditions little different from slavery—whether bound to human masters or to the more cunning and powerful figures within their own ghettos.

Vigilantism

Because of the turbulent, war-torn history shared by both kingdoms, vigilantism became deeply rooted in the local culture—far more than in neighboring realms such as Aedirn. During times of conflict, when the bulk of the military was occupied on the front lines, lawlessness often surged in the vacuum of authority.

While Lyria and Rivia never developed the sprawling mafias or organized societies seen in

Novigrad, outbreaks of crime were frequent enough that the Crown often looked the other way when vigilantes emerged to combat them. The reasoning was simple: resources were too scarce to suppress those who were, in practice, doing the state's work.

Some of these figures became so famous that villages were later named after them. A notable example in Lyria is the village of Greenbow, said to take its name from a vigilante archer clad entirely in green who hunted criminals with his also green, bow. According to legend, his end was a grimly ironic one: he perished after being struck by one of his own arrows, his lack of protection proving his undoing.

Writing System

As elsewhere in the North, the Commonwealth employed the Modern Alphabet as its primary script. However, the strong dwarven presence in the twin kingdoms meant that the dwarven ideograms—on which the Modern Alphabet was partially based—remained in use in certain contexts. For example, the Commonwealth's Secret Service was known to have used early Onginnan ideograms as a secure method of coded communication.

Xenophobia

Despite the pervasive misogyny and the discrimination faced by non-humans, when it came to attitudes toward foreign humans, the Commonwealth was among the most progressive countries of the North. Alongside the coastal kingdoms, it developed a reputation—though often muddied by stereotypes—for relative openness, integration, and assimilation of outsiders.

A notable example occurred in Lyria during the reign of Queen Kalis. Historical accounts recall that she was frequently accompanied by a sorceress from the distant southern land of Melukka, Aanya of Chalotra. It is said that Aanya attempted to defend both Kalis and her newborn daughter on the fateful day of the queen's assassination by teleporting them through different locations. However, as the assassin was himself a mage, the attempt went awry: one of the teleportation spells separated the trio, leaving Kalis alone with her killer for too long. Aanya returned in time only to prevent the likely murder of the infant princess, saving the future Queen Meve while failing to protect her mother.

Weapon Laws

As in other Northern Kingdoms, it was common in the Commonwealth for almost everyone to carry a weapon—or, if they could not afford one, at least tools that could serve as weapons in case of need. This was especially true in Rivia, where bearing arms in daily life was nearly universal.

Lyria, however, diverged from this norm. While weapons were still widely owned and carried, social conventions discouraged bringing them to certain events, whether large public gatherings or private affairs among the nobility. To enforce this, Lyria developed the specific

profession of the weapons-keeper, who not only stored arms during such occasions but, depending on the length of custody, could even perform basic maintenance on them.

The greatest concentration of weapons in Lyria, ironically, was found in and around the non-human districts, where crime was more prevalent than the crown would have preferred. There, weapons were not only common but considered a necessity for survival amid the frequent outbreaks of violence and unrest.

Women's Rights and Sexual Minorities

Although the Commonwealth did see some advances thanks to broader progress in other countries, these were limited at best. By many measures, Lyria and Rivia became—second only to the coastal kingdom of Kerack—the most misogynistic of the Northern Kingdoms.

Even in the famed "*Golden Age*" of Queen Meve, deep-rooted misogyny caused constant problems. When Meve began to rule alone after her husband's death, she was forced to harden her already fierce character in order to overcome opposition from her own nobility. A particularly brutal example of this mentality, as mentioned prior, had already occurred earlier in the 13th century: Meve's own mother, Kalis of Lyria, was murdered by an assassin-mage hired by her husband, the king, after he grew tired of her bearing only daughters.

Queen Kalis the day of her death

By that time, in much of the North, women could already own businesses, seek divorces, and exert greater autonomy. In the Commonwealth, however, independent women were considered scandalous. Mages, specially sorceresses, despite being a source of considerable income thanks to tourism, were often regarded as corrupt, decadent influences on society.

Questions such as abortion were unthinkable. Kalis herself bore at least six daughters before Meve, and Meve too, under heavy social pressure, was forced to carry both of her sons to term despite her youth—both of them "*happy accidents,*" as she later described them. Historians even suspect that King Belohun of Kerack attempted to force through anti-abortion policies in his country inspired by the Commonwealth's example.

Prostitution was harshly punished with imprisonment for both sex workers and their clients. Female infidelity, meanwhile, was a capital crime: the woman was almost invariably hanged, while men were acquitted unless their justification for the affair was judged wholly inadequate. The prevailing mentality reduced women to second-class citizens, guided—or restrained—because of their supposed *"over-emotionality."* Notable exceptions existed, however, such as Reynard Odo, Meve's second husband, who broke with these attitudes and was remembered for his unusual respect toward women.

The condition of sexual minorities was little better. Deep-rooted prejudices abounded, most of them deriving from negative stereotypes attached to mages and their reputed promiscuity. Even in comparison with other Nordling countries, intolerance ran deep, and queer individuals faced a society eager to stigmatize and marginalize them.

Demographics

At its height, the Commonwealth's population is estimated to have ranged between two and four million, concentrated primarily in the twin capitals that gave the union its name: Rivia and Lyria.

Roughly 90% of this population was human. Of these, about 80% were native Lyrians and Rivians, while the remaining 20% consisted of Nordlings from other kingdoms and Haakis merchants. These latter were mostly silk traders from that land of the Far East who, for various reasons, settled permanently within the Commonwealth. Unlike the cosmopolitan coastal realms engaged in far-flung overseas trade, this influx was relatively limited, leaving Lyria and Rivia comparatively homogenous in composition.

The remaining 10% of the population consisted of non-humans. As elsewhere in the North, they lived marginalized lives—confined in ghettos within cities or clustered in rural villages, though the latter often showed more intermingling with humans.

Among these minorities, dwarves were the most numerous, and also the most heavily targeted by discrimination, particularly in Rivia. This hostility stemmed largely from economic rivalry: Rivian metallurgy suffered heavily under competition with Mahakam, which produced superior goods at cheaper prices. The resentment grew so pronounced that, when the Scoia'tael movement emerged, many of its dwarven recruits hailed from Lyria and Rivia.

Besides dwarves, there were smaller populations of gnomes and Aen Seidhe elves. Even rarer were enclaves of griggs and bobolaks, and, in scattered remnants, communities of orcs and vrani. One of the most famous figures of this latter group was a vrani tailor, who by the late 13th century had risen to prominence as the informal leader of the non-human ghetto of Lyria city.

Economy

The economy of the Commonwealth of Lyria and Rivia was primarily agrarian, with animal husbandry and fishing close behind. Thanks to the comparatively mild climate, the region became known for exporting fruits, legumes, and vegetables to other kingdoms during seasons when harsher weather prevented their cultivation. The tempering effect of the great lakes allowed such crops to thrive well into mid-autumn.

A modest wine industry also existed, though production was aimed largely at local

consumption. Lyrian and Rivian wines never achieved the renown of Kaedweni vintages or the celebrated products of Toussaint.

Another important source of income was the export of domesticated animals. Falcons in particular were highly prized, to the point that one settlement in the Commonwealth bore the name Hawksburn in their honor.

Tourism also played a role in Lyria. Its picturesque mountain, as mentioned prior, became a favored retreat for Nordling mages, many of whom built summer villas there, as well as a seasonal destination for nobles from neighboring realms.

Rivia, by contrast, leaned more heavily on industry. Its fine workshops and smithies produced weapons and goods widely lauded for their quality and craftsmanship. Much of this economic vitality stemmed from the assimilated dwarves of the kingdom, who, despite being confined to ghettos, were the backbone of Rivian metallurgy and manufacturing. Mining also took place in the frontier with the Blue Mountains, conducted largely by dwarves. Unable to compete directly with Mahakam, Rivian operations focused instead on extracting rarer minerals absent from the dwarven heartland.

A Lyrian Blacksmith

At its height, the Commonwealth relied on a wide variety of imports, both from its immediate neighbors and from distant lands. Temeria supplied fine textiles, while Haakland provided silk through long-distance trade. Despite their own forests, the Lyrians and Rivians imported wooden furniture and paper from Angren, whose timber was considered superior in quality. From Aedirn came liquors and specialty products from its renowned distilleries.

On rare occasions, Zerrikanian merchants—whether traveling the now-abandoned inland Korath Desert route to the Northern Kingdoms or venturing inland from coastal landings—introduced exotic goods: luxury furs, jewelry, advanced weaponry such as repeating crossbows, rare oils and poisons, spices, and, in the rarest cases, live exotic animals.

Geography

The geography of the Commonwealth was notably varied. To the east, it bordered the Blue Mountains. Several of its passes did not lead to Haakland proper, as Nordling cartographers mistakenly believed, but rather to the northern and southern regions of Western Franq and Franq respectively.

These were not the only highlands of the country. Lyria itself was characterized by

numerous mountain ranges and fertile valleys well suited for cultivation. One such formation marked the kingdom's northern border with its neighbor Aedirn.

The typical Lyrian landscape

In its Rivian half, the Commonwealth lay close to the Yaruga river and was traversed by the valley that gave the region its name: the Dol Angra. This valley extended northward from the south, passing through Lyria, Rivia, and Aedirn, and ultimately joining the broader Pontar Valley.

To the west, the Commonwealth bordered the Temerian vassal state of Mahakam, with the city of Rivia resting against the easternmost massif of the dwarven realm, the Craag Ros hills. Further southwest it met the disputed region—later an independent kingdom—of Angren (not to be confused with the Nilfgaardian province of the same name), as well as another Temerian vassal, Sodden, once the mountains gave way.

In the southeast, the land had once belonged to the patchwork of principalities and lordships that initially survived Rivian and Lyrian expansion. By the time the Commonwealth consolidated, however, its borders reached the Amell Mountains, making it a neighbor to the duchy of Toussaint. There it also approached the Fiery Mountains, which stood as the natural frontier separating the North from the Korath Desert further east. This geographic position paved the way for the later emergence of the Mosaic Region, with its notoriously complex history.

History

Ancient Times

The first civilized inhabitants of what would one day become Lyria and Rivia were not dwarves, gnomes, or even elves, but the vrans. According to elven chronicles that survived the coming of humans, the vrans established in the region a realm that elven diplomats and explorers called Ardei, meaning "*the first*" or "*the primal*" in Elder Speech. This aligns with reports that their original homeland lay east of the Blue Mountains, and the fact that most vran cities in the North were concentrated along the foothills of this range that would later mark one of the frontiers of the human kingdoms.

Archaeological and comparative studies place the founding of Ardei long before the arrival of even the gnomes, perhaps as early as 4000 B.R. (Before the Resurrection)—hence the name bestowed by the elves.

The fall of Ardei came around 1000 B.R., when the Aen Seidhe replicated the tactic once used at Loc Muinne: releasing the same deadly bacteria against the vrans of Ardei. Later excavations by Oxenfurt scholars suggest that as much as 90% of the population perished, with the remaining 10% fleeing to unknown lands. Their disappearance left the territory open for elven settlement.

Age of Migration

With the vrans gone and scattered into unknown territories, the Aen Seidhe established a new kingdom in the region: Or Kern (Elder Speech: *Grey Heart)*, ruled from its capital at Ard Gwyd, present-day Gwydberg, by the Casamm elven dynasty. This house, fervent devotees of the goddess *Mori Rígain*—later known among humans as Morrigan—held sway until sometime after the arrival of Nordlings in the 760s A.R. (After the Resurrection).

At that time, on the counsel of the Aen Saevherne Simlas Finn aep Dabairr, the Casamm dynasty and their followers abandoned Or Kern altogether, migrating eastward into the Blue Mountains, being one of the first elven Aen Seidhe groups in doing so. There, according to rumor and scattered local legend, they may have attempted to refound their kingdom, though no conclusive evidence has ever been found.

During this period, the elves of Or Kern also waged a series of wars against the dwarves of Mahakam. These conflicts, later remembered as part of the long cycle of enmity between elves and dwarves, ended inconclusively. At times, elven hosts were repelled outright through the cunning of gnomes and dwarves working in alliance; at others, battles ground to costly stalemates. Eventually, both sides wearied and the wars subsided.

As for the etymology of Or Kern, scholars believe the name reflected both the possible later remorse of the Aen Seidhe for what they had done to the vrans, and the religious devotion of its rulers to the Lady of Ravens. Since, in times of war, Mori Rígain was said to bear a grey heart, sometimes showing mercy (her white heart), sometimes cruelty (her black heart).

First Conjunction of the Spheres

According to later legends surrounding the death of the famous witcher Geralt of Rivia during the Rivian Pogrom on June 6, 1268, Loch Eskalott, the mist-shrouded lake next to the city, was said to have been one of the many points of entry for the beings that came through during the First Conjunction of the Spheres.

Like Toussaint—believed to have served as the gateway for the first vampires—Eskalott was rumored to mark a permanent scar left by that multiversal upheaval. Yet unlike Toussaint, the rift at Eskalott never fully sealed. Chroniclers described the lake's notorious fog—white, thick, and disorienting—as more than natural weather. To some, it was the veil itself, the thin barrier between worlds.

Some accounts even claim the lake was linked to the mysterious Isle of Avalon, said to lie in the humans' original homeworld before their arrival. Others, based on tales of common folk lost in the mist but eventually returned, argue Avalon was not part of that world at all but a separate sphere: a place where legendary kings and heroes rest after death. In this vision, not two but three "*soap bubbles*" touched during the Conjunction, with Eskalott forming the "*in-between bubble*," a liminal crossing between major realities.

According to this belief, the later-told tales of the Monster of Loch Eskalott described not a native beast, but a creature who came from that mist—an interloper from another sphere.

Formation of the Kingdoms

The area of Lyria and Rivia saw human settlement long before the coming of the Nordlings. Archaeological excavations carried out by the Dravogradian Archaeological Society in the 14th century uncovered Neolithic-style settlements that did not correspond to any known non-human race. This suggests a human presence in the region dating back at least to the appearance of mankind in the 230s A.R., when humans—and many other beings—first arrived in the world during the First Conjunction of the Spheres.

What became of these earliest settlers is uncertain. Some scholars argue they may have been assimilated so completely by the local Aen Seidhe that their existence was forgotten, while others theorize they were displaced, absorbed, or annihilated by early dissidents from the nascent human realms who fled into the area not long after Nordling expansion began.

For various reasons, the region remained sparsely populated for centuries, until two great migratory waves reshaped its destiny: the first following the Six Years' War in the 9th century, and the second in the 11th century. Both waves were comprised largely of war refugees and political opponents of the rulers of Temeria and Cintra.

From these influxes arose a patchwork of principalities and lordships. Among them were the principality by the river (riv in Common Nordling) Yaruga—thus Rivia—and the principality where lilies grew in abundance—Lyria. Of the founders, one Cintrian prince hailed from the House of Raven, while Lyria's founder was of the Temerian dynasty, who almost certainly named his new realm in honor of the lilies on the Temerian coat of arms.

The Small Wars

Between the 9th and 12th centuries, the lands that would one day form the Commonwealth were wracked by a series of intermittent conflicts later remembered as the Small Wars. The name derived both from the brevity of these clashes and from the small scale of the principalities and lordships that fought them—petty wars for expansion, prestige, and fleeting influence.

This cycle of strife continued until around 1115, when the remnants of the fearsome Cuchaq Horde from the Far East spilled into the region. Having ravaged Kaedwen and been driven out of it by the locals, the survivors travelled southward avoiding to pillage the Duchy of Venger — the future kingdom of Aedirn—, when the ruler of the territory promised them "*greater riches*" south of it´s territory. Their arrival further destabilized the already weakened patchwork of states.

By the 1130s, the devastation wrought by the marauders had cleared the way for two powers—Rivia and Lyria—to rise above their rivals. Absorbing many of the smaller lordships an

principalities, both countries grew into prominent kingdoms.

In 1133, seizing the opportunity presented by the death of Rivia's king, King Berrik of Lyria unified the two crowns under his rule, proclaiming himself King of Lyria and Rivia. This marked the first true union of the twin realms. Yet the union was short-lived: upon Berrik's death a decade later, the confederation fractured once more.

The Complete Consolidation of the 12th Century

After the death of King Berrik and the subsequent division of Lyria and Rivia back into two independent states, both kingdoms steadily grew in power and influence. Over time, the remaining principalities and lordships were gradually absorbed in what came to be known as the Silent Wars—a series of small but decisive conflicts that brought the entire region under the control of Berrik's heirs.

Roughly a generation or two later, a pivotal dynastic alliance was forged when Impecca—daughter of King Egon of Lyria and granddaughter of Berrik—married Prince Ceran of Cintra. This union established enduring ties with the Yaruga's coastal kingdom, strengthening Lyria's influence on the political stage of the North.

Toward the end of the century, in the 1170s, the Rivian and Lyrian crowns extended their reach further. King Andrei, Berrik's great-great-grandson, together with his cousin from the Lyrian branch on other frontiers, expanded their influence into neighboring Angren and Riverdell, consolidating the Dol Angra region as the land of the Twin Realms for centuries to come.

The First Northern War

During the years 1262–1263, the period of the First Northern War—also known as the First Nilfgaardian War—Lyria and Rivia, at that time fully united through the prior marriage of Queen Meve of Lyria (1227–1317) and Reginald of Rivia (1215–1259), and strengthened by Meve's subsequent effective rule, remained officially neutral.

The Commonwealth took advantage of this position, reaping considerable profits as its workshops and industries operated at full capacity to supply war materiel to those kingdoms directly embroiled in the fighting, while its farms provided provisions to neighboring Aedirn and Temeria, who—like Cintra and Kaedwen—were directly part of the conflict.

Beyond the sale of arms and provisions, the Commonwealth's participation was limited to the voluntary involvement of individuals who chose to take part on their own. Among them were mercenary companies and two mages of Lyrian and Rivian origin: Atlan Kerk and Old Gorazd, whose sacrifice during the climactic Battle of Sodden Hill proved pivotal to the North's victory, despite their deaths in the fighting.

The Union of the 13th Century

Despite the region having been firmly consolidated under the crowns of the Twin Realms, Lyria and Rivia remained separate kingdoms for some seventy-three years. Though no open wars

erupted during this period, tensions steadily mounted between the two realms.

By 1243, circumstances brought matters to a head. Both of Meve's brothers had died young—one in a tragic carriage accident, the other during a joust gone awry—while her many sisters had been married off to local and foreign nobles. Fearing the prospect of a young woman ruling alone, and seeking a way to resolve their disputes with Rivia, the Lyrian nobility pressed for a diplomatic marriage.

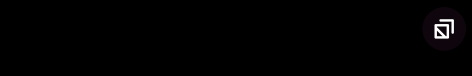
Letters were exchanged with the aging King Sterjo of Rivia, and an agreement was reached: his son Reginald would wed the sixteen-year-old princess Meve. For Rivia, this arrangement posed no difficulty, as Reginald had already fallen deeply in love with the young Lyrian. Winning Meve's consent, however, proved more challenging. Lavish gifts were sent to sway her—Ofieri tapestries, sapphire-studded necklaces, even a fine Kovirian lute—all of which she rejected. It was only when Reginald presented her with a full suit of gilded plate armor, once worn by his father, that she relented.

The following year, the two were married, marking the final reunification of Lyria and Rivia after nearly a century of division.

The Lyrian Golpe

At the outbreak of the Second Northern War in 1267, only days after Nilfgaard's invasion of Lyria—an assault enabled by intelligence secretly passed to the Imperial secret service by Count Cadwell and culminating in the Battle of Dravograd—the court was thrown into crisis. In the aftermath, Count Cadwell, Queen Meve's eldest son Villem, and the Council of Peers urged the queen to acknowledge Nilfgaardian supremacy.

Their proposal was to surrender the Commonwealth, transforming it into a vassal state of the Empire, thus "*sparing*" it further bloodshed and devastation.



Meve being arrested during the coup

When Meve refused, standing firm against capitulation, the Lyrian aristocracy revealed its duplicity. Many had already concluded a pact with Nilfgaard during her absence at a prior summit of the Four Kingdoms. United with Cadwell, they staged a coup: Meve was arrested, and the crown was forced onto her son's brow. Count Cadwell himself presided over Villem's coronation as Villem I, the so-called puppet-king of Nilfgaard.

Some historians, however, argue that this treachery had been brewing long before. They point to the final words of King Reginald to Meve—*"trust no one except Reynard Odo"*—as evidence that Nilfgaardian influence within the Lyrian court predated even his death.

Confined in her tower, Meve was confronted by Cadwell, who coldly warned her she would be executed by dawn. Yet fortune favored her resolve. Under the cover of night, she escaped—thanks to the intervention of Gascon, the noble turned outlaw who led the infamous Strays of Spalla; Reynard Odo, her loyal general and once the right hand of Reginald; and a handful of

soldiers who refused to betray their queen.

Exiled from her own country, Meve began a grueling campaign across Aedirn, Mahakam, and Angren. There, she gathered recruits, mercenaries, and allies to forge a new army with which to reclaim the confederation, expel the Nilfgaardian occupiers, and punish the traitors who had betrayed her.

During this period, her younger son Anséis briefly joined her host. Yet fearing for his safety, Meve arranged his departure to Toussaint, where he spent several years training as a knight—safeguarded from the perils of her struggle, but destined to play a central role in the eventual fracturing of the confederation once again.

The Second Northern War

For a full year, Queen Meve waged her desperate struggle against the Nilfgaardian occupiers, leading a guerrilla campaign with her few remaining loyalists while tirelessly seeking allies. Many rulers and commanders were at first skeptical of her cause. Yet as her raids and victories inspired scattered northern forces to rally once more, her persistence forced them to reconsider. Step by step, her ragged host grew into an army, and figures of renown began to join her banner: Rayla the Black of Aedirn, Eyck of Denesle, and even Isbel aep Muir Moss, an atypical Nilfgaardian sorceress, among others.

At one point, her efforts even drew the attempted recruitment of two witchers: Ivo of Belhaven of the Bear School—who refused her service but provided counsel that enabled her to slay the dreadful gernichora—and the legendary Geralt of Rivia, who marched beside her after the Battle of the Bridge with his hansa: Milva Barring, Cahir, Regis, Angoulême, and Jaskier. Their companionship, however, was short-lived. Branded later as deserters, the hansa ultimately departed from the White Queen's army to continue with their own higher purpose: the search for Princess Cirilla of Cintra.

The queen's odyssey unfolded in stages. In Aedirn, she fought beside King Demavend III during what would later be called the First Battle of Aldersberg in July 1267. Yet the kingdom's dire plight left him unable to grant her tangible aid—his efforts consumed by the evacuation and protection of his newborn illegitimate son (the future Baldwin I) from the then-besieged Aldersberg. Still, he offered her a token of trust: a ring of friendship, which she later used to secure entry into Mahakam.

Meve during the war

In the dwarven territory, Meve rendered service and forged bonds strong enough to achieve what few monarchs ever had: persuading Elder Brouver Hoog to allow his folk to fight openly for her cause. "*These dwarves*," he declared pointedly, "*go not at my command, but of their own will*." Yet their presence was reinforcement enough to shift the balance.

From there she pressed into the swamps of Angren, where she confronted her old nemesis, the traitor Count Cadwell—by then with a new title and under Nilfgaardian protection. After the battle she slew him, winning both vengeance and fresh adherents to her banner. In that same campaign, her forces also triumphed at the Battle of the Bridge—where she received the facial scar that would later mark her visage—thanks in no small part to the unexpected brilliance of Cahir, the Vicovarian deserter of Nilfgaard and, as noted, companion of Geralt's hansa.

At last, with her new army behind her, Meve marched home. Beginning with Rivia, she liberated the Commonwealth piece by piece. By early spring of 1268, her campaign coincided with the decisive Northern victory at the Battle of Brenna, together driving the Black Ones back across the Yaruga.

Once restored as sovereign, Meve sealed her partnership with Reynard Odo in marriage, elevating her steadfast general to royal consort. To reassert crown authority, she also made the painful choice to imprison her eldest son, Villem, condemning him for his treachery in the coup that had nearly destroyed the Commonwealth's independence.

Thus, from betrayal and exile, the "*White Queen*"—so named for the whitening of her hair under the crushing stress of war—returned triumphant: scarred, but unbroken.

The Interwar Period

After the conclusion of the Second Northern War, the monarchy of the Commonwealth focused not only on rebuilding the war-torn country but also on preparing for the possibility of renewed conflict. Unlike the other monarchs who signed the peace treaty with Nilfgaard during the negotiations at Cintra, Meve—though careful never to show it openly—remained deeply mistrustful. Having endured the very worst of the war when it was in it's early stages, she harbored no illusions that the Empire might not attempt another invasion.

Determined to strengthen her armies and fortifications, the crown borrowed heavily from several major banks. This debt mounted further in the years that followed, placing increasing strain on the kingdom's finances. It would never have been fully repaid had it not been for the arrival at court of the naive but ambitious young Temerian cartographer, later turned first-time explorer Fabio Sachs. His proposal for a grand expedition to the Far East struck many as folly—but Meve, recognizing both the risks and the potential gains, chose to support it. The venture's eventual success postponed the collapse of the Commonwealth until, almost a century later, the Haaki Invasion happened.

The Third Northern War

In the turbulent summer of 1271, following King Demavend's assassination and Henselt of Kaedwen's invasion of Aedirn—beginning through the border town of Vergen—Queen Meve refrained from aiding her ally. The defenders of Vergen concluded she would not risk further bloodletting after her army had been drained in

the previous Nilfgaardian war. In truth, she simply refused to surrender any part of her country to a possible Kaedwenian invader.

Peace proved fleeting. By August, Nilfgaardian forces had struck, overwhelming border patrols and seizing most of Lyria and Rivia by December, thus beginning the Third Northern War. Unbeknownst to Meve, operatives of Temerian Intelligence—Bernard Ducat and Vernon Roche—entered secret negotiations with Field Marshal Havart var Moehoen, offering to cease hostilities against Nilfgaard, assassinate Radovid V of Redania, and concede Aedirn and Lyria to the Empire in exchange for Temeria's autonomy. Simultaneously, the leader of the Redanian Intelligence Service Sigismund Dijkstra plotted to seize Redania as chancellor, reject the Emperor's bargain, and unite the remainder of the North under his rule.

A Rivian Pikeman during the Third Northern War

As in the previous war, Meve refused to yield. With a ragtag band of partisans, she fought relentlessly to liberate her country, relying on loyal allies hidden in taverns, villages, and backrooms. This, more than anything, marked the key difference from the earlier conflict: in its very first months, the White Queen rekindled resistance. Farmers hid grain from Nilfgaard and fed her troops at the risk of torture; smiths forged weapons in secret workshops; and recruits rallied to her banner from all walks of life. By the war's midpoint, she had reclaimed roughly half her lost territory, carried forward by her enduring popularity. By the time the fighting ended, the Commonwealth had technically recovered nearly all its lands—though Meve's battered forces lacked the strength to secure them fully.

The Witch Hunts

Although the Eternal Fire was only a minor cult in the broader Nordling religion within the Commonwealth, the deeds of its infamous witch hunters soon reached the lands of Lyria and Rivia.

By 1274, the priesthoods of Kreve and Morrigan, seizing upon the same wave of fanaticism that had already swept through Redania, launched their own version of them, the so-called inquisitors. These version of the Redanian Witch Hunters and Nilfgaardian Mage Hunters, fusing the best of both infamous occupations, exploited the bitter postwar economic hardships to inflame hatred not only against mages—accusing them, often with twisted reasoning, of having caused the latest conflict and the ruin it left behind, with even priestesses of Morrigan condemning them for "*misusing magic*"—but also against non-humans.

A Lyrian Inquisitor training two novices

Old Nordling prejudices were sharpened by new charges: that dwarves, elves, bobolaks, vrans with their supposed "*shape-shifting abilities*", gnomes, and so

on had been selfish in times of famine, that they spied or sabotaged, or that they otherwise undermined the confederation. The result was devastating. Over the next four years, the Commonwealth witnessed a new cycle of persecutions, one of the worst of their history: as many as ten recorded pogroms, public burnings of people and property alike, wrongful imprisonments, public humiliation displays of the "*evil-doers*", and widespread dispossession.

Non-humans bore the brunt of the violence, though many mages, alchemists, herbalists and suspected "*sympathizers*" were likewise targeted. The combined trauma further deepened divisions between Rivians, Lyrians, and their minority populations.

Though Queen Meve and her consort Reynard attempted to curb the excesses through royal decrees and limited interventions, their efforts met with little success. By the penultimate year of the terror, even the Council of Peers was debating the hunts not as crimes, but as a "*necessary evil*" to channel public rage—an outlet to prevent greater unrest, or even the disintegration of crown authority itself.

The Iron Judgment

This weakness invited the ambition of Radovid V. Declared the "*Protector of the North*" after his victory over the Empire, the Redanian king advanced into various northern lands in what became known as the Iron Judgment. In the case of the Confederation, Gascon Brossard—restored to his noble titles after the Second Northern War and bound to Meve by the trials they had endured together—founded the company of condottieri known as the Iron Falcons. Acting partly on his queen's orders and partly of his own will, Gascon waged a relentless campaign. By 1274, through a combination of guerrilla warfare and popular support, his company had expelled Redanian garrisons and restored the Confederation's lost territories to their rightful owner. From then on, the Iron Falcons became a persistent thorn in Radovid's side, joining countless rebel efforts across what he styled the "*Redanian Empire*" until, by the early 14th century, Redania was finally forced back to its pre-war borders.

The Iron Falcons Infantry fighting a horde of abominations from Rissberg somewhere in Redania

After the war, in 1275, Meve briefly considered abdicating in favor of her younger son, Anséis. Yet his years in Toussaint during the Second Northern War had left him enamored with frivolous pursuits. Seeking glory in the International Knights' Tourney of Toussaint for a third consecutive year, he repeatedly evaded his mother's efforts to mold him into a capable ruler in various fields. The queen forbade his departure, but he disobeyed, vanishing from court to compete. Realizing his prolonged absence, Meve sent him a curt message: his monthly allowance was cut off regardless of his placement, and she wished him "*good sport.*"

From that moment on, Meve resolved to remain on the throne until her death, continuing to rule with iron resolve while slowly, if stubbornly, striving to change Anséis for the better, so all her efforts to protect her country would not have been in bain.

The Fabio Sachs Expedition to the Far East

It took Fabio Sachs several years of traveling across the Northern Kingdoms and through certain Nilfgaardian vassal states—together with the steady backing of his family—before he finally secured the funding to launch his long-dreamed voyage to the Far East. This milestone came in 1279. The following years were consumed by bureaucratic hurdles and preparations for what would become one of the most consequential undertakings in Nordling history, with further delays arising from events that briefly involved Sachs himself.

His negotiations with the aging Queen Meve were famously tense. Though intrigued by the immense wealth such a venture might yield for Lyria and Rivia, Meve remained deeply skeptical of the risks. Ultimately, however, she was persuaded: the prospect of paying the newly adquired debts as well leaving behind a full treasury for her successor, ensuring the country's economic security and military readiness in case of another invasion (ever recalling Kovir's reliance on its mercenary host), outweighed her doubts.

In 1282, the expedition finally departed. By 1285, Sachs returned triumphant. His journey had not only dispelled myths and tall tales about what lay beyond the Blue and Fiery Mountains, but also brought back treasures, artifacts, and knowledge. Most importantly, he secured several trade treaties—Meve's strict condition for granting the crown's financing—which elevated the Commonwealth's geopolitical standing.

One example of this newfound prominence was that the Commonwealth briefly exerted modest influence in the southern region of Barsa, lasting from 1284 until the Haaki Invasion of 1350. This period is now regarded by scholars as part of the proto-colonial phase of Nordling expansion through the rest of the world. It was not true colonization, but rather the earliest Nordling attempts at sustained overseas presence and cultural exchange.

Cintra had, in fact, initiated this proto-colonial phase a few years earlier by claiming Sabana Isle in the Far East—though in reality it was a Nilfgaardian proxy venture, disguised as Cintran to mask the Empire's expansion.

In this sense, Sachs' land and sea expeditions (since another to the Far North was done in 1286) are often described as the prelude to the Nordling Colonial Era. His final voyage, undertaken between 1302 and 1306, pushed beyond the known seas altogether, leading first to the discovery of the Silk Islands. There, his two white ships were stranded for nearly four years until they could be repaired. From those islands, the Western Continent became faintly visible on the horizon—impelling Sachs to press further.

Tragically, during the first coastal exploration of this "*New World,*" Sachs and the crew of his vessel succumbed to an unknown disease. He was the last to perish, dying at a promontory later named Fabio's Cape, where his ship was found derelict decades later. His discoveries

survived only through the accounts of the second vessel—the one on which Sachs had not sailed—which managed to return to the Northern Kingdoms. Their testimony, however, was doubted by many, and for decades the Western Continent remained a rumor cloaked in sailor's tales.

It was not until the 1380s, when Nilfgaardian sailors finally corroborated Sachs' discoveries, that the truth became undeniable. The revelation spurred the Northern Kingdoms—mocked by the Empire for years as backward dreamers for clinging to Sachs' "legends" by sending later expeditions with mixed results—to launch their own colonial ventures. Though each realm pursued its own designs, competition with Nilfgaard eventually forced them into a union of overseas holdings: the Confederation of Fabiola, established to present a united front should the Empire attempt to completely dominate the New World.

These proto-colonial links between the Confederation and Barsa, fostered first by Sachs, were fragile but significant. Nordlings and Barsameni from all professions traveled in both directions. Records even speak of dynastic marriages: at least one Barsameni consort entered the Lyrian-Rivian royal household—a union that scandalized conservative circles in both realms of the Confederation.

Some historians argue that the controversy surrounding this alliance, coupled with the financial strains of maintaining long-distance trade, was among the many seeds that later contributed to unrest in the Commonwealth. These tensions, combined with the disasters of the Haaki Invasion and the ensuing economic collapse—alongside other minor yet significant factors—eventually set the stage for the War of Regrets and the final dissolution of the Lyrian-Rivian state.

The War of the Brothers

In 1317, Queen Meve passed away at the age of 80, dying peacefully in her sleep. Her successor was named as her eldest son, Villem—crowned Villem I—despite the treason he had once committed during the Second Northern War (1267–1268), when he allied himself with the Nilfgaardian invaders, accepted the role of vassal king, and staged a coup against his own mother. Meve's decision rested on her own words: he was the *"less incompetent"* of her two dim-witted sons, and had already served a long enough punishment for his betrayal.

The choice, however, provoked mixed reactions among the local nobility, and more dangerously, the fury of her younger son, Anséis. Feeling humiliated that a traitor had been chosen over him, he began to rally support among discontented lords. By 1319, the simmering resentment erupted into open rebellion, giving rise to what would later be called—aptly enough—the War of the Brothers.

The conflict lasted for three years, ending in stalemate. In April 1322, the Treaty of Dravograd was signed, with Villem conceding the crown of Rivia to his brother in order to prevent further bloodshed. Thus the Confederation was once more divided, split back into two independent kingdoms.

The Reunification of the 14th Century

The division of Lyria and Rivia after the War of the Brothers did not last long. The age of their monarchs at the time of their coronations made such a split untenable. Villem I had been sixty-six when crowned in 1317, while his younger brother Anséis was sixty-seven when he took the throne of Rivia in 1322 following the Treaty of Dravograd.

Moreover, Villem—owing both to his years in imprisonment and to his age—never produced an heir. Anséis, however, had secured his line. Thus, only a decade after the separation, in 1327, Villem died of natural causes at the age of seventy-six, with his brother soon following. His nephew, Dragos (born 1280), seized the opportunity. Backed by the precedent of his father's branch and the disarray left in the Council of Peers—once a joint body of both realms—he asserted his claim.

Dragos' "invasion" was in truth more ceremonial than martial: with little opposition, he entered Lyria, claimed the vacant throne, and declared the reunification of the realms. This marked the final reconstitution of the Commonwealth before its ultimate collapse a few decades later.

The Haaki Invasion

Foretold centuries earlier by the elven seer Ithlinne, the invasion of the eastern steppe hordes finally came to pass. Though the dates and precise point of entry differed slightly from the prophecy, her vision proved uncannily accurate—some would later say 99%, others, a perfect 100% if one accounted for the shifting borders of time.

In September 1349, the Haaki descended from their distant homelands, striking first through southern Ebbing—once the outer edge of the Northern Kingdoms before its subjugation by Nilfgaard. It was here, some argued, that Ithlinne's foresight had "*erred,*" failing to account for modern borders. Yet like a storm breaking upon the land, the hordes swept forward unhindered.

Sappers during the Haaki Invasion

For a full year they burned and plundered, leaving a trail of devastation across vassal state after province—even troubling the mighty Nilfgaardian Empire to the point that most of its troops were recalled to defend the core, leaving the Haaki to roam unchecked. At last, true to Ithlinne's fateful words, the invaders reached the modern borders of the Northern Kingdoms in 1350. There, despite their ferocity, they were brought to a halt. In Mahakam, the divided Nordling armies along with the dwarves in the so-called Northern Front, springing a devastating ambush. The trap shattered the Haaki command structure, decapitating their leadership and forcing the remnants to flee back to the steppes whence they had come.

Yet this hard-won victory came at staggering cost. In the war's early and middle stages, before unity was achieved, the North endured defeat after defeat, paying in blood, sweat, and fire for

each inch of ground. The destruction was unprecedented, and though many kingdoms suffered, few bore the brunt as heavily as the Commonwealth of Lyria and Rivia. Its proximity to the east exposed it to wave after wave of Haaki atrocities—slaughters, burnings, and cruelties so extreme that they seared themselves into history, myth, and legend alike.

And though the Haaki were driven back, the scars they left proved deeper than most realized. Of all the foes they ravaged, it was the Commonwealth that emerged most fatally weakened—its downfall already seeded, its slow unraveling set into motion by the storms of 1350.

The War of Regrets

After the expulsion of the Haaki invaders from the Northern Kingdoms, the Commonwealth entered a period of profound economic and social crisis. The devastation of war had left shortages everywhere, and distrust in the monarchy grew. Combined with a royal administration whose results were at best mixed, this unrest culminated in 1355 with the outbreak of a new civil war—later remembered as the War of Regrets.

In this conflict, numerous noble factions sought to overthrow the monarchy, each claiming they could govern better. Yet unlike in earlier disputes, no broad consensus emerged to divide the nobles into two or three clear camps. Instead, every lord clung stubbornly to their own vision of rule.

The result was the bloodiest war in the history of the Commonwealth: fragile alliances, chaos across the land, and ephemeral states rising and collapsing within mere weeks. The carnage dragged on until 1358, when the Second Conjunction forced the warring parties to set aside their ambitions in the face of a far greater threat: the monsters pouring into their world.

In time, Lyria recovered, reuniting as a single kingdom once more. Rivia, however, did not. The civil war had struck it far harder, leaving the city of Rivia itself in ruins. Lacking the resources to rebuild, its stones were dismantled and repurposed to restore other settlements. Thus the kingdom—and even its capital—slipped into obscurity. Only its coat of arms endured, remembered through the successor states that adopted altered variations of the symbol as their own.

Language

As in other Northern states, the official language of Lyria and Rivia was Common Nordling, in its own regional variety, and it was also the most widely spoken tongue.

Because of the proximity to Mahakam and the significant presence of dwarves, Onginnan (Dwarvish) was also frequently heard and left a notable mark on the Commonwealth's dialect—especially in curses, technical terms, guild and other organization names, and even some toponyms—despite the fact that most dwarves who came from Mahakam already had a working knowledge of Common.

After Onginnan, it was not uncommon to hear gnomes speaking their own tongue, as well as

Elder Speech, both in its Aen Seidhe and Orcish varieties.

Other non-human languages were heard in smaller measure, but since most non-humans in the Commonwealth ultimately traced their roots to Mahakam, their native tongues had often been displaced in favor of Onginnan after centuries of exile and cultural influence.

In addition, at least one creole is known to have developed: a hybrid of Common and Onginnan. This mixed language was spoken in villages and small towns across both kingdoms and was colloquially referred to as Lyvian or Ririan, depending on the region.

Religion

As in the rest of the Northern Kingdoms, the faith practiced in the Commonwealth was the broader Nordling religion, though with its own regional character.

Gods such as Telawel, Lilvani, Kreve, Nehaleni, and figures like the prophet Lebioda or the many saints of the Nordling pantheon were venerated. Yet in Lyria and Rivia, devotion focused above all on two almost antithetical figures.

On one side was Melitele, goddess of love, marriage, peace, fertility, nature, abundance, and motherhood. On the other, Morrigan, the Lady of Ravens, patroness of magic, ravens, and war.

Morrigan's prominence was cemented by the castle of Gwydberg, originally built in her honor on the disputed borderlands between Sodden and Rivia. After Gwydberg's loss to the Commonwealth in favour of Cintra, her cult rose even higher: a massive temple shaped like a crow in flight was constructed in the city of Lyria itself, built from black stone and guarded by Morrigan's fearsome warrior-nuns. These militant sisters, according to chroniclers, surpassed even the famed Melitele Guard in discipline and ferocity.

Worship of the two goddesses alternated across time and place. At certain points Rivia was considered the local stronghold of Melitele's devotion, while Lyria leaned toward Morrigan—and at others the roles were reversed.

Examples of Lyrian and Rivian Names

Lyrian and Rivian names followed a three-part structure: *given name + second name + surname* **(Examples: *Dragos Mihail Codreanu* or *Meve Kalis Galca*)**. The surname was usually inherited from the father, or, failing that, from the closest male relative.

Male Names

Agapie, Alin, Anastas, Andrian, Anséis, Arcadi, Arcadie, Arbot, Aristarh, Artemie, Aurel, Bodgan, Calistrat, Cantemir, Clazriamik, Clelt, Cludrard, Costas, Costica, Dan, Deonis, Dimchi, Dimciu, Dimitrian, Dimitru, Dirsolt, Dragom, Dragomir, Dragos, Drenis, Duzro, Eberhartt, Eftimie, Egon, Ega, Evdochim, Evgheni, Evghenie, Evghenii, Eustație, Fedea, Felixk, Filaret, Fiodor, Gascon, Gheoghi, Gherasim, Gherman, Gika, Gobrilt, Grigorie, Hagona, Halciu, Hari, Horrird, Hristaki,

Hristos, Hristu, Hugo, Ihugo, Ignatie, Igori, Ionel, Iov, Irodion, Iulian, Iura, Iurie, Iacov, Jorgo, Jorghi, Lavrentie, Larkin, Larken, Leontie, Luca, Macarie, Manuil, Marin, Marinel, Metodie, Mihail, Mihajlo, Naci, Nachi, Nashula, Nandru, Nelo, Nibanirt, Nicolas, Nicodim, Nicon, Nir, Nirromold, Parü, Pantelimon, Paramon, Profire, Pusho, Reginald, Reginalde, Reynt, Reynard, Ris, Robeu, Serghie, Stelos, Sterjo, Taki, Tase, Tea, Terzord, Thego, Tiho, Tika, Turas, Ugok, Vanea, Vanchi, Varirt, Varsonok, Vibrard, Villem, Vitalie, Vodramak, Vold, Vucol, Wirsing, Yanachi, Yorgu, Yota, Yoti, Zenovie, Zica, Zidromon, Zisa, Zitis, Zos

Female Names

Achilina, Aculina, Adela, Agafia, Aglaida, Ala, Alesea, Anare, Anca, Anea, Apfia, Apolinaria, Areta, Arsenii, Axenia, Bocea, Caleriax, Catea, Catiușa, Chirana, Clavdia, Denia, Dimitriana, Dunea, Edviga, Efrosinia, Ena, Epestemia, Epistemia, Epistimia, Eudichia, Eudochia, Evdochia, Evghenia, Fedosia, Feodosia, Fiodora, Fiodoria, Gheorghina, Glicheria, Haleth, Haritina, Helena, Igeth, Ile, Ilas, Ine, Inese, Ionella, Irene, Iulita, Ive, Kalis, Kalysa, Kedis, Katrinel, Kizath, Kogah, Laurentia, Lena, Leonida, Lesea, Lilea, Liuba, Liubovi, Macrina, Mahe, Malah, Marina, Marica, Marusha, Matroana, Mavra, Meve, Milintina, Mire, Miropia, Modash, Nadea, Nagiacah, Nalea, Nedelia, Nicoleta, Ninela, Olesea, Olia, Panaghia, Reliah, Roniava, Roviana, Roxandra, Ruxa, Ruxanda, Sanea, Sica, Sove, Vaganah, Venyath, Viorika, Virath, Yegath, Yenath, Yigath, Yini, Zana, Zoe, Zoea, Zoia, Zorina

Surnames

Acatrinei, Adamache, Adamescu, Adameșteanu, Agarici, Agiu, Ailincăi, Albot, Albu, Aldulescu, Alecsandri, Alexandrescu, Alexandru, Alexe, Alupei, Amam, Anastase, Andreescu, Andronache, Andronic, Apostu, Ardelean, Arhip, Asset, Aumbanza, Axente, Baghdasar, Banciu, Băcilă, Bădescu, Bălașa, Balan, Bărbulescu, Boboc, Bron, Brona, Broswot, Brossard, Bucătaru, Bucșă, bubuc, Butnaru, Cadanțu, Caldwell, Căpățână, Cazaban, Cerchez, Chifu, Chivu, Cihărean, Ciuta, Coandă, Codreanu, Cojocari, Condurache, Costache, Costin, Cristescu, Crivitchi, Daldolt, Deac, Demetrescu, Denn, Dobrescu, Donici, Drăghicescu, Egrira, Eliade, Esposito, Faur, Filotti, Fradise, Galca, Galt, Gazwelt, Gherea, Ghimpu, Goga, Goott, Gorrau, Gott, Guțu, Hadârcă, Hănescu, Herscovici, Inasqui, Ion, Iordan, Itu, Keldwalt, Lacusta, Lafu, Lascăr, Maldebon, Martinescu, Mera, Moțpan, Mutru, Nistor, Nichita, Oaidă, Odo, Oldall, Onciul, Ozgan, Paler, Papadopol, Petrache, Plămădeală, Prona, Răceanu, Rarledd, Rordann, Skutnik, Sulac, Taeta, Tismaneanu, Tomna, Vacla, Văluță, Vebraber, Vianu, Xime, Zime

Monsters

Most of the monsters present in the Commonwealth were the same as those found throughout the North. Yet certain types were particularly prevalent. Trolls of many kinds roamed the land, especially due to the proximity of Mahakam. Each spring, when the dwarves carried out their annual Spring Cleaning to drive monsters from their mining tunnels, many trolls fled into Lyrian and Rivian lands. Rock trolls were the most common—one, in fact, famously aided Queen Meve unknowingly during the Second Northern War by hurling boulders to block an Imperial advance. Magma trolls were also sighted, while in Lyria's higher peaks, the rare ice trolls lurked.

Near Angren, vizimian archespores posed a constant hazard, while common echinops were a

scourge throughout the Commonwealth—akin to nekkers ruining crops in other northern realms. Devourers were another grim menace, claiming many lives and leaving a deep mark on local folklore. Peasant tales insisted they were the malformed daughters of Yaga, the Witch Queen, who lived in huts on chicken legs where they stored their victims' remains before delivering them to their mother. Witchers, of course, dismissed such tales as superstition, noting that devourers were simply necrophages of the night-terror subgroup.

Cases of strigas were frequent in the Commonwealth's chronicles, many of them albino. These were often tied to unwanted pregnancies gone wrong, giving rise to grim legends of "*pale brides*" haunting the night. Some tales told of women who, cursing their unborn child with their last breath after suffering unwanted unions, birthed strigas as an act of vengeance.

Beyond the usual northern bestiary, Lyria and Rivia also knew rarer horrors. The Brute of Lyria, a unknown type of fiend remembered in legend, thought by some witchers to have been one of the rare higher fiends. The saetona, a proto-draconid, resembling a massive winged serpent, venomous and capable of hypnotic gaze. The morgos, goblinoid creatures; witchers debated whether they were a subspecies of common goblin or their own kin within the goblinoid family. The paparrasolla, a solitary flying monster of the harpyan group, infamous for ambushing mountain villages. The bû, a strigiform predatorial monster, nocturnal and as territorial and dangerous as a griffin or archgriffin. The false hydra, also known as mountain hydra or balaur, a rare, many-headed reptilian horror, thought extinct but whispered of in old mountain folk songs. Vaewolves, better known as vrykolakas, a subspecies of werewolf, unusually violent compared to their kin but not as strong as the ulfhedinn of Skellige. Nekurats, vampires better known as nosferat or nosferatu, regarded as even more dangerous than katakans. Golden katakans, a powerful strain of katakan, characterized by golden-tinged skin and wings, rivaling the nekurat in sheer menace.

Among these, none were more infamous than Vladius Drenis Dragosescu, an elder golden katakan who haunted the Aedirnian-Lyrian frontier for centuries. Having long since mastered the shapeshifting into human guise that elder katakans acquire with age, Dragosescu terrorized both locals and foreigners alike. Legends claimed his cruelty sprang from tragedy: after Aedirnian soldiers slew the human woman he loved and his dhampir son abandoned him, he turned to vengeance. His name endured in whispered curses for generations, a terror lurking along the northern borders of the Commonwealth.

According to rumor, Dragosescu impaled the bodies of his victims as a mockery of both Aedirnians and Lyrians, leaving them as grisly warnings along the borderlands he haunted. Tales hold that his reign of terror ended only when his estranged dhampir son returned, aided by a drunkard witcher and a sorceress, to finally slay the monster.

Notable Organizations

- Commonwealth's Secret Service
- Dravogradian Archaeological Society
- Grand Society of Theatre of Vinograd

- Heimwehr

Notable Locations

Lyria

Cities

- Dravograd
- Lyria
- Toriba

Estates

- Anisse's Estate
- Adrianna's Estate
- April's Estate
- Atlan Kerk's Estate
- Fenrik's Estate
- Franz Kniprode's Estate
- Lord Clayton´s estate

Farms

- Arbot´s Farm

Fields

- Arralutz
- Halmdike

Hamlets

- Carduus Fields

Inns

- The Red Crow

Keeps

- Rastburg Castle
- Sencara

Lakes

- Loch Oran

Mansions

- Gargos of Gemella's Mansion
- Jada Glevissig's Mansion
- Tetra Gilcrest's Mansion
- Vrai Natteravn's Mansion

Meadows

- Ruddy Meadows

Plains

- Lyrian Plains

Ravines

- Arbot´s Ravine
- Talogra

Rivers

- Badger´s Run
- Yavina

Routes

- Sloback Rut

Temples

- Melitele´s Temple
- Morrigan´s Black Temple

Towers

- Gus of Tretogor's Tower
- Lucretia Vigo's Tower
- Tugdual's Tower
- Zacaré's Tower

Towns

- Algedorm
- Demarte
- Salena
- Wetterton

Universities

- University of Lyria

Villages

- Cridam
- Elsterberg
- Hawksburn
- Greenbow
- Miller´s Bend
- Turnifen
- Wildapel

Rivia

Cities

- Gradobor
- Khigvor
- Rivia
- Vinograd

Estates

- Count Cadwell´s Estate

Forests

- The Ruewode

Hills

- Craag Ros Hills

Quarrys

- Ravenkluft

Inns

- The Familiar Sword Inn
- The Fox Tail Inn

Lakes

- Loch Eskalott

Keeps

- Devil´s Tower
- Maldebon´s Castle

Roads

- Egon´s Road

Towns

- Broadhead
- Waldenrad

Universities

- University of Rivia

Villages

- Dunnock
- Willowhain

Workshops

- Printer´s workshop

Notable People

For a full list of Lyrians and Rivians, see Category:Lyrians and Rivians.

Rivians

Aristocracy

- Count Caldwell
- Reginald
- Reynard Odo

Criminals

- Gascon Brossard

Knights

- Chevron Knight

Mages

- Eberhartt of Rivia

Peasants

- Rob

Witchers

- Geralt of Rivia (naturalized)

Lyrians

Aristocracy

- Berrik
- Egon
- Ceran and Impecca
- Kalis
- Meve

Inkeepers

- Marina aep Dornala

Mercenaries

- Rayla

Royal Stewards

- Gustave Perrault

Soldiers

- Gideon Barr

Mixed

Aristocracy

- Anséis
- Villem

Successor States of the Rivian Kingdom

- Eskalottia: Formed around the area of the lake from which it took its name. Though small in size, it inherited the symbolic legacy of the Rivian crown, claiming to be the true heir. Its name preserves the renown of both the extinct kingdom and the lake.
- Odona: Established on Rivia's western frontier with Angren, it was named after its ruling house, the Odo family. From its foundation, Odona was frequently in conflict with Angren due to its expansionist ambitions.
- Linia: A narrow stretch of land along the frontier with Mahakam, so named for its "line-like" geography. It was populated by a mix of humans, gnomes, and dwarves—many of them, at the time, refugees of the War of Regrets.
- Mozaikúl: A patchwork of micro-realms ruled by various nobles and city-states in the southeastern reaches of old Rivia. Its name, derived from the Nordling word mozaik (*mosaic*), reflects its fractured political landscape.

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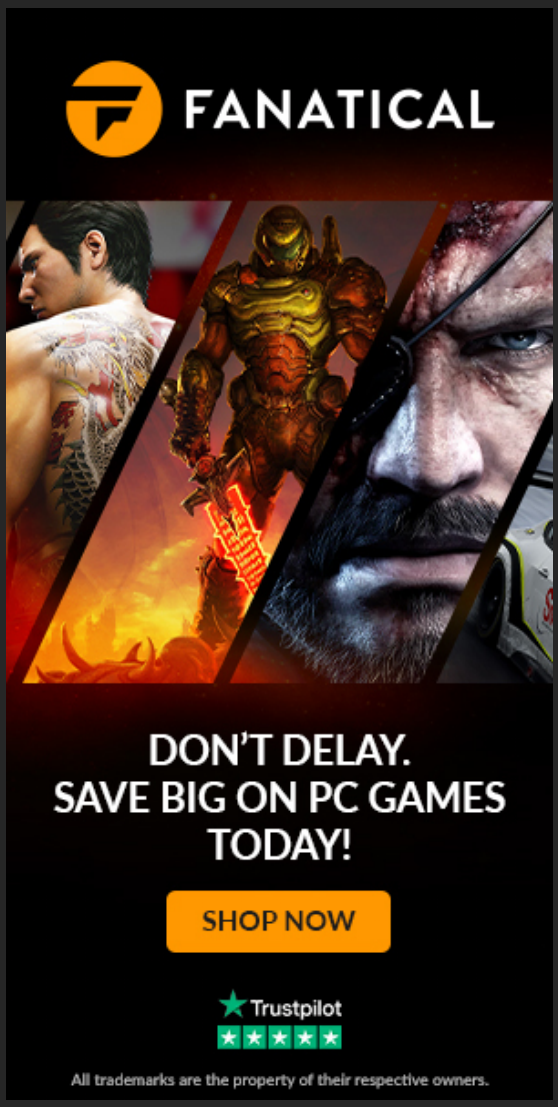

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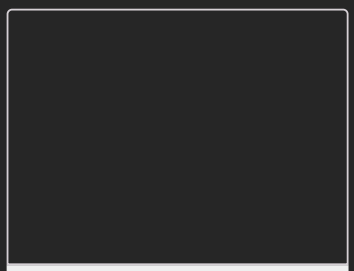

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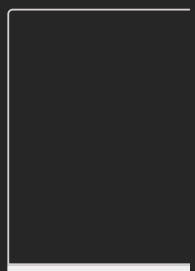
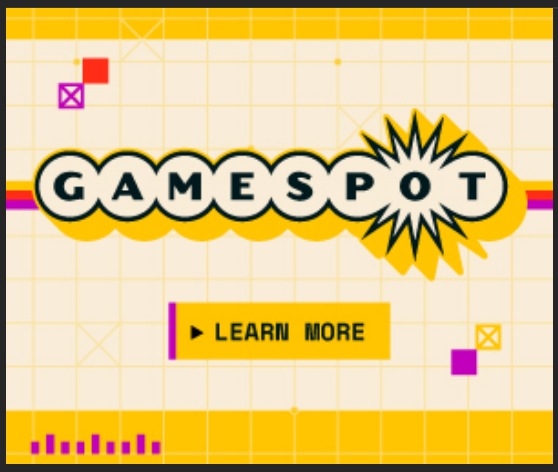


Lyria & Rivia
an hour ago



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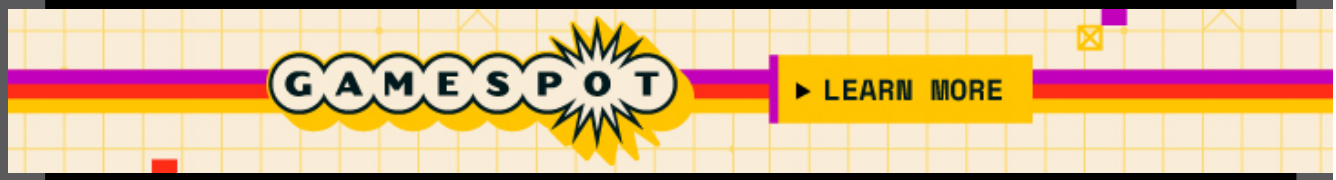

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